Distr.: GENERAL
E/ECA/HUS/ENV/1
10 March 1983
Original: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

LC/NAIROBI

REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL REGIONAL COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND FIRST MEETING OF THE JOINT INTERGOVERNMENTAL REGIONAL COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND ENVIRONMENT

(Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 28 June-2 July 1982)

83-633

A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. The third meeting of the Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and first meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment (ICRC/HUS/ENV) was held at ECA, Addis Ababa from 2 June to 2 July 1982.

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following States members of the Economic Commission for Africa: Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, the Congo Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, the Ivory Coast Gabon, Ghana, Guinea Kenya, Liberia Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, the United Republic of Cameroon, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Upper Volta, Zambia, Zaire and Zimbabwe.

3. The following countries were represented at the meeting by observers: China, Cuba, the German Democratic Republic, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Sweden and Turkey.

4. The following United Nations organs, organizations and bodies were represented at the meeting. The United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Childrens Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Labour Office (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

5. The following intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations were represented in an observer capacity: the African Development Bank (ADB), the African Regional Organization for Standardization (ARSO), the Africa Union of Architects (AUA), the German Foundation for International Development (DSE) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

6. The following officers were elected.

Chairman: Mr. Mustafa Nyang anyi, Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, United Republic of Tanzania.

First Vice-Chairman: M.Gaston Félicien Oloua Nouba Secr taire d'Et t auprés du Ministre du Cadastre, Urbanisme et Logement, Gabon.

Second Vice-Chairman: Mr. Assane Diagne Directeur Construction et Habitat, Senegal.

Third Vice-Chairman: Mr. Babikr Ali Eltom, Minister for Construction and Public Works, the Sudan.

Rapporteur: Ms. Lebohang Letsie, Assistant Secretary, Urban Development and Housing, Ministry of Local Government and Lands, Botswana

... AGENDA

7. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work
4. Spatial planning within the framework of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa
5. A framework of strategy for the development of the construction industries in the African region
6. Human settlements financing mechanisms (in relations with the setting up of housing financing institutions)
7. Review of the implementation of Stockholm Action Plan in the ECA region, 1971 1981
8. Environmental perspectives for a regional programme for Africa up to the year 2000
9. Environmental Education and Training Programme for Africa - UNEP decision GC.9/20 D of May 1981
10. Follow up action on the development of environmental protection legislation in the ECA region
11. Human environment work programme and medium-term plan 1984 1989
12. Combating desertification in Africa
13. Any other business
14. Adoption of the report

8. Concerning the organization of work, the Committee agreed to hold discussions both in plenary and in two subcommittees on human settlements and the environment respectively.

C. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

Opening addresses

9. The meeting was declared open by the out-going Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Alhaji Ahmed Musa, Minister, Federal Ministry of Housing and Environment, Nigeria, who, after welcoming participants and observers to Addis Ababa, expressed his sincere gratitude to the Government and people of Ethiopia for their untiring dedication to and laudable solidarity with the cause of progress in Africa. He recalled various United Nations resolutions urging co-operation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and the United Nations Environment Programme and added that, if the proposed guidelines on environmental aspects of human settlements planning focused on the projects identified within the framework of such co-operation, it

would be of great help to project planning and implementation in the African countries. In conclusion he expressed gratitude to the Executive Secretary of ECA and the Executive Director of UNCHS for their support during his tenure of office, and wished his successor every success in the great tasks ahead of him.

10. In his opening statement Mr. Adebayo Adedeji, Executive Secretary of ECA, welcomed participants and noted that the decision to set up the Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment was indisputable proof of the Committee's high sense of responsibility and conviction that the future of the African region depended not only on the collective efforts of all concerned but also on a co-ordinated and integrated approach. By bringing human settlements and the environment under the same decision-making machinery, ECA had an organ capable of taking into account the reciprocal effects of the programmes in those two sectors.

11. Poverty was the worst form of pollution in the developing countries and represented the main source of environmental degradation with the loss of agricultural land, depletion of tropical forests and increasing problems of waste disposal. In order to cater for the twin needs of environment and development, third world countries must enhance the protection of the environment through measures leading towards sustainable development and rational management of the natural resource base. In addition to purely economic aspects, a sound human settlements policy should be one of the decisive factors for improving the physical living conditions of the populations of the continent. In that connexion, physical planning of economic activities should aim at ensuring a new geographical distribution of activities, effectively opening up rural areas and providing modern infrastructures in such areas as well as ensuring the necessary links between geographical areas where raw materials were located and the settled areas, without neglecting the establishment of infrastructural networks for transport and trade.

12. In conclusion he warned that the future of the African region could not conform to the directives of the Lagos Plan of Action unless the region examined seriously the problems of structural and geographical imbalances in human settlements emanating from the economy of the countries and mobilized the necessary resources. Decisions should be taken regarding the establishment of the machinery for pooling talents and experiences and he hoped that the deliberations of the joint committee would produce concrete decisions on that subject as well as in other crucial areas for the optimal management of habitat and environment in the service of the African people.

13. In his address, Mr. Arcot Ramachandran, Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, UNCHS (Habitat), pledged the fullest support of his organization to the very commendable efforts of the Joint Committee especially in the field of human settlements. Referring to what he considered the most consequential phenomenon affecting human settlements development in Africa today, namely the rapidity and scale of urbanization that was sweeping the continent, he noted that most African countries had just begun to discover the challenges of urban responsibilities and of urban planning as well as the positive role that human settlements activities could play in economic and social development. Vigorous national action, supported to the extent possible at the international level, was necessary to find lasting solutions to existing problems.

14. In the implementation of its work programme, UNCHS (Habitat) had continued to place the highest priority on the provision of direct assistance to African countries through a co-ordinated programme of technical co-operation, research and development

activities and dissemination of information and audiovisual films. The United Nations General Assembly had decided in principle to designate the year 1987 as the International Year of Shelter for the Homless and active preparation for the Year would start in 1983 following its formal proclamation by the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session later in 1982.

15. In conclusion, he drew the attention of the meeting to the ongoing activities of UNCHS with respect to two of the substantive issues which the Committee would discuss later namely a framework of strategy for the development of the construction sector in the African region and secondly human settlements financing mechanisms. The secretariat of UNCHS looked forward with great interest to the results of the deliberations of the Committee.

16. In his address Mr. C. G. Golubev, Assistant Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), said that the establishment of a Joint Committee was a reflection of the conviction of African policy makers that the issues of environment and human settlements were inexhorably intertwined and that action in one could not be assessed independently of the other. He pledged that UNEP would work closely with the ECA secretariat and the Joint Committee in setting priorities for environmental matters in the African region. He then directed the attention of the meeting to two of the major environmental problems faced by the African region, namely desertification and environmental education and training and outlined the work done jointly by UNEP and ECA in that regard. Other problems which he hoped the Joint Committee would consider during its deliberations and incorporate in subsequent work programmes included conservation of wild life species and genetic resources, atmospheric zone depletion, nitrogen shortage in the soil, loss of grasslands and forests the need for plentiful clean water, the need to control the increasing numbers of potentially dangerous chemicals released daily into the environment and the need to transport and dispose of hazardous wastes, especially long lived radioactive waste.

17. In conclusion, he noted that a fundamental precept which could not be ignored was the substainability of the development path that countries chose to follow so as to ensure that future generations were not exposed to the frightening possibility of eking out a rudimentary existence from a continent whose capacity to meet basic needs had been undermined.

18. The Commissioner Relief and Rehabilitation Commission of Ethiopia, welcomed participants on behalf of his Government and outlined some of the measures it pursued to solve problems relating to human settlements and the environment. He drew attention to an environmental and human settlements problem being perpetuated on the peoples of Southern Africa, namely the policy of apartheid, and called on African countries to spearhead the effort to broaden and strengthen all forms of support to all progressive forces fighting apartheid.

1 Plenary Session

Spatial planning within the framework of the Monrovia Strategy for the economic development of Africa (item 4)

19. The representative of ECA introduced document E/ECA/HUS/3 on the spatial implications of the implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for an endogenous, self sustaining and self reliant development of the African region. The strategy formed the basis of the Lagos Plan of Action. While stressing that general economic planning and physical planning were inseparable, the document noted that, although most of the Governments of the region had acknowledged the need to plan their economies, only a few of them had formulated national physical plans which incorporated considerations for the harmonious location of economic activities. A major consequence of the colonial exploitation of natural resources in African countries had been the creation of large cities equipped with modern infrastructures and facilities while the rural areas remained virtually undeveloped. A new approach to physical planning was therefore needed to correct such imbalances. In that connexion the document discussed the relationship between physical planning, on the one hand, and agricultural development, industrial development, communications and transport networks, urbanization and the environment, on the other hand, and outlined the various measures that African countries had to adopt in that regard.

20. In conclusion, the document emphasized that physical planning in Africa must give priority to the eradication of economic imbalances within each country through a rational distribution of economic activities. Whatever the peculiarity of national situations and the level of development, there could be no physical planning without the use of maps and statistical data which were indispensable. Countries were therefore called upon to launch very comprehensive cartographic programmes and make a scientific inventory of all the economic, geographic, social and other relevant data. With those two tools, each country would be able to draw up its physical planning programme, formulate its urban master plans, define its urban hierarchy, establish its communications networks, draw up rural zoning programmes and decide on the location of its industries.

21. Many delegations congratulated the secretariat for presenting the document which gave an in-depth analysis of the physical planning problem in the African region and highlighted priority areas that demanded the attention of Governments in the region. It was emphasized during the discussions that there was an urgent need to deal with the existing unbalanced patterns of development that had deprived the rural areas of essential infrastructual services and encouraged the continued influx of the rural youth into urban areas for jobs that were non-existent. In some countries the urban population accounted for nearly 50 per cent of the total national population. Since the rural development problem was at the forefront of the concerns of most Governments, there was the need to give consideration to "urbanizing" rural areas in terms of the provision of facilities and opportunities without destroying existing traditions. Some delegations described the efforts being made in their countries to integrate spatial planning into national economic planning. One country, for example, had adopted a regional physical planning approach based on comprehensive studies and analysis of the resource base in each of the zones in which the country had been divided for purposes of regional development planning, taking account of the consequences of various choices of development programmes and activities. The creation of "new towns" as development poles was being promoted in another country.

22. The importance of integrating human settlements planning with environmental planning was also stressed because of the intrinsic relationship between the two and also in order to avoid some of the problems that characterized human settlements development in the industrialized world.

23. It became clear during the discussions that many countries in the region lacked the expertise to handle the development and implementation of national physical plans. In fact, only about half of the countries in the region had institutions for training professional architects and planners and some countries were experiencing acute shortages of such professional personnel. It was felt by some delegations, therefore, that technical assistance at the regional level would have to focus on that problem with a view to helping countries not technically in a position to develop national physical plans in the forseeable future. In that connexion, it was also suggested that a way should be found to form a cadre of African experts to assist countries on a rotational basis. The Africa Union of Architects had been helping to secure admission into existing African schools of architecture and planning for students from countries which did not have such institutions. Most countries had in some cases awarded fellowships to such students. Since it would not be feasible for all countries to set up schools of architecture and planning it was necessary to strengthen existing ones and where necessary convert some of them into subregional institutions.

24. Some delegations expressed concern that there had been no formal presentation of the progress in activities undertaken by the secretariat in connexion with the resolutions adopted at the second session of the Committee. The representative of ECA explained that the matter was to be taken up later in committee. He however made a brief presentation on the progress in activities since the previous session and highlighted the implementation problems that the secretariat had faced particularly with regard to financial and human resources. The meeting agreed that a careful analysis of the secretariat's resources would have to be made to ensure that the revised programme of work adopted for 1982-1983 could be implemented successfully.

A framework of strategy for the development of the construction industry in the African region (item 5)

25. Introducing document E/ECA/HUS/2, the representative of ECA referred to the paralyzing effect of the short-comings of the construction sector, which mostly were a legacy of the past, reflected in the shortage of building materials and construction services and problems in terms of raw materials, construction machinery, project consultancy services, technology and skills. However, all those problems were amenable to solution by adopting a rational and integrated approach and by developing the sector on the basis of a package of short, medium and long-term project actions which focused specifically on local conditions. Housing was an important but smaller component of the construction demand and there were larger demands on the construction sector from other sectors of the economy. It was therefore necessary to take a total view of national construction demand for the proper development of the sector. Full awareness of the construction potential (including short- and long-term demand), continual government and public support, improved financial strength and investment capacity reinforced by a sound base of indigenous skills and manpower, adequate availability of building materials, construction equipment, accessories and tools, and a local base of technology were essential for an integrated approach.

26. The institutional machinery for such an integrated approach was generally lacking. African countries could benefit in that respect by constituting a 'nodal mechanism

within an appropriate ministry at the national level and a 'Development Council' at the subregional level to look after the growth of the construction sector along the desired lines.

27. While planning the development of indigenous capacity for building materials production, it was necessary to keep in mind the possibilities of diversification and decentralization so as to make efficient use of locally available resources and to overcome the constraints posed by long distance transportation and distribution. At the same time, there was scope for optimizing production within existing plant capacities. Alternate materials like lime and pozzolana, clay products, stabilized soil blocks, etc. had to be popularized. Finally, building techniques and building materials oriented to local conditions should be backed up by appropriate building codes and regulations and unified standards.

28. Among the other practical methods of strengthening the construction sector were adoption of simpler and locally relevant construction technologies, easier access to financing facilities, institutionalized facilities for skills and manpower, plant hiring, workshop services and materials stocking and supply in order to improve the field services. In order to accord the necessary attention to all those aspects, countries ought to draw up a comprehensive development programme.

29. In the discussion which followed, participants agreed that the document constituted a feasible and practical approach to resolve the problems faced by most countries in respect of building materials and construction industries. A central point emphasized by all who participated in the discussion was the problem of the abnormally high cost of construction in all African countries and the pressing need for a thorough study of that problem in order to bring about a significant reduction in construction costs as that factor seriously affected housing development plans. One delegation observed that, even though the indigenous building industry was well established in terms of local raw materials and adequate market, it was disappointing from the point of view of quality of production and cost-competitiveness in relation to imported materials. One of the reasons was its heavy orientation to imported technologies, depriving itself of its true value as a local industry. Cement, ceramic sanitary ware and clay bricks were cited as examples. The energy consumption in such production was very high and there was scope for reduction.

30. The consensus was that building and building materials research was a basic necessity in order to develop locally 'local' building materials and promote cost-reduction in their production and utilization and that joint centres for such research should be set up. Several countries were already taking steps to promote the production of clay products both as a local industry and as a means of meeting the demand for cement for purposes for which cement was not a clear necessity. The assistance ECA had given in that regard was acknowledged. It was reported that one country had reduced taxes on building materials to bring down costs.

31. The other pressing need in most African countries was for manpower training facilities and programmes, particularly for middle level technicians in respect of construction services and building materials production. It was suggested that serious consideration should be given to setting up a joint training centre for that purpose. Also there was need to develop a cadre of indigenous contractors and to encourage, in the first instance, small local contractors to take on medium size contracts and gradually develop their managerial and technical expertise. One country had already taken steps in that direction.

32. The problem of lack of agency co-ordination within the countries was also referred to. The concept of a 'nodal mechanism' was commended and it was reported that in one country the Government has set up a National Construction Council as a focal point and entrusted it with all responsibilities for developing the construction sector including training and research aspects. In some other countries, the new national housing policies reflected special emphasis on promotion of the construction sector.

33. It was agreed that local building materials industries development backed by training and research facilities should be promoted with the specific objective of achieving cost reduction in building materials and in construction without compromising on quality standards.

Human Settlements Financing Mechanisms (in relation with the setting up of housing financing institutions) (item 6)

34. The representative of ECA introduced document E/ECA/HUS/1 and noted that a major cause of the inadequate supply of funds for housing, a basic necessity of life, was the partition of the vital subsectors among different government ministries and the lack of co-ordination among them. For example, building materials development came under the Ministry of Industry, land and access ways under the Ministry of Urban Development and housing banks were often controlled by the Ministry of Finance.

35. Since no Government could afford to house its population from public revenue the provision of money from public funds must be regarded only as a supplement to individual efforts. However most housing banks in African countries had met with little success because of the nature of their establishment. The long-term lending nature of housing finance required that, in addition to the fairly large financial resources required at the initial stages, there should be a regular injection of additional funds in order to cope with the ever increasing recurrent housing demand. Evidence from the region indicated that most countries were reluctant to accept such a suggestion or else would be unable to afford such budgetary allocations.

36. The document therefore suggested possible ways of mobilizing funds for housing development programmes. They included commitment of at least 20 per cent of long-term savings (pensions and social security funds) for use by housing financing institutions; introduction of a housing "cess" whereby all workers contributed a small percentage of their incomes specifically for housing development; development of a tripartite system among employers, employees and financial institutions whereby funds were pooled together from the three sources.

37. While recognizing the need for a regular supply of funds to ensure effective operation of housing financing institutions, the document also emphasized the need for the institutions to have an effective development strategy and lending policy to avoid severe leakages which could lead eventually to shortage of loanable funds. In that connexion, it was suggested that at least 40 per cent of all loanable funds should be used for the development/rehabilitation of building materials industries, contractor pre-financing, establishment of plant pools and warehouses for building materials.

38. In conclusion, the representative of ECA called on the ministries responsible for housing in each country to save the housing sector by urging Governments to pay greater attention to the needs of the sector. He stressed the need for effective legislation to channel part of long-term savings into housing development and urged participants to examine carefully the idea of a housing "cess". He also called on housin

ministries to urge employers, employees and financing institutions to consider the tripartite funding system and urged existing financing institutions to evolve effective development strategies and lending policies. Noting that the financing of rural housing had not been covered in the document because of its complex nature, he invited participants to give their views on the subject.

39. In the discussions which followed, it was agreed that financing of housing construction was a subject that needed urgent attention by Governments in view of the fact that housing was a basic necessity of life to which the population was entitled. Many delegations welcomed the recommendations advanced in the document as practicable and feasible, and elaborated on measures that their Governments were taking to resolve the problem of housing finance in both urban and rural areas. Some countries had in recent times formulated national housing policies which spelt out clearly measures to be taken to promote housing development including financing mechanisms.

40. In one country government legislation empowered the central bank to direct all commercial banks to give favourable terms for housing loans and specified a fixed percentage of loanable funds to be allocated to the housing sector. Banks which failed to achieve the set target by the end of the financial year were required to pay the outstanding difference to the national mortgage bank. Other housing finance schemes being operated in that country included use of a percentage of the Provident Fund as capital for the mortgage bank, government-sponsored staff housing schemes for civil servants under which loans were given at attractive rates of interest and employer housing programmes administered by firms employing more than 500 persons in compliance with government directives. In another country a trade union had succeeded in mobilizing the contributions of its members in support of housing development programmes (similar to the "cess" idea). Private building societies were also mobilizing contributions from nationals resident outside the country to invest in housing units on their behalf.

41. Many countries had benefited from World Bank-financed site-and-service schemes through which serviced plots had been made available to persons desirous of constructing their own houses. Within the framework of that concept, some countries had placed serviced sites at the disposal of private estate developers.

42. As far as financing rural housing constructions was concerned, suggestions were made for the creation of village co-operatives and the mobilization of personal savings generated from such activities as small-scale industries under the management of the village people themselves. Assistance could be given by Governments for improvement of the quality of existing houses in the rural areas through the use of better materials developed through research. There was also need for studies to be undertaken on suitable rural housing programmes in the various countries. In that connexion, the representative of the Africa Union of Architects informed the meeting that the Union, at its recent congress in Harare, Zimbabwe had decided to encourage research and development activities related to the development of rural infrastructure and housing.

43. The representative of the African Development Bank briefed the participants on the progress made to date in connexion with the establishment of "Shelter Afrique", an institution to finance housing programmes in African countries. The functions of the new institution, expected to become operational after October 1982 with its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, would include mobilization of funds to give loans to national financing institutions for government-approved housing programmes; provision of technical

assistance to countries to set up housing financing institutions, where they did not already exist; mobilization of technical and other resources in collaboration with United Nations organizations like ECA and UNCHS (Habitat) to assist member States in developing long-term programmes for habitat, and provision of assistance to countries to develop manpower for housing financing management and related activities. Many delegations expressed the hope that, when Shelter Afrique became operational, it would adhere to its stated aim of providing assistance mainly to low-income groups.

Review of the implementation of the Stockholm Action Plan in the ECA region, 1971-1981 (item 7)

44. The representative of the secretariat, in presenting document E/ECA/ENV/1, stated that the paper was intended to review ECA activities in the light of the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment as well as the Commission's efforts to implement the Action Plan that ensued from the Conference. The paper also attempted to highlight the complex nature of the environment problem within the framework of the new international economic order, the African Strategy for Development up to the year 2000 and particularly the Lagos Plan of Action, the implementation of which should be seen in the context not only of self-reliance and self-sustenance but also the deepening world economic crisis. He further stated that the issues were deemed timely because the Committee had come into operation at a time when ECA had carved out support strategies for the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action including the Industrial Development Decade for Africa and the Transport Decade in Africa to ensure that Africa developed its techniques and technologies in order to stop being a dumping ground for those exotic techniques, technologies and life-styles that would continue to degrade the African environment socially, economically and politically. Within that context, the paper reviewed the Commission's areas of environmental co-ordination and collaboration in project execution and monitoring within the divisions of the Commission, with other United Nations organs, particularly UNEP and with member States, non-governmental organizations and bilateral agencies.

45. Solutions to the environment problem in Africa could be initiated only if African Governments actively supported the objectives and principles of the legislative instrument provided by the Lagos Plan of Action that would result in co-operative action towards self-reliance and self-sustenance as the basis for effective standards of laws, regulations and the political and administrative instruments for environmental protection and conservation.

46. In the discussion that followed some delegations pointed out that during the period under review their countries had set up machineries for environmental management, either national secretariats or interministerial committees. They were also signatories to regional conventions for environmental protection, particularly the Regional Seas.

47. The representative of UNEP pointed out that his organization had carried out a similar exercise to review achievements ten years after Stockholm and the establishment of the ECA Environment Co-ordination Unit with UNEP's participation was one example of what had been done. He was concerned about the blanket dismissal by the document of further studies, for much had to be done in terms of research into the environmental impact of toxic materials.

Environmental perspectives for a regional programme for Africa up to the year 2000 (Item 8)

48. The representative of the secretariat stated that document E/ECA/ENV/2 was a natural follow-up to the previous document (E/ECA/ENV/1) on the review of the implementation of the Stockholm Action Plan in the ECA region over the past decade. Whilst the latter evaluated past activities, the former indicated future trends in environmental perspectives for the ECA region, patterned along the global position discussed at the UNEP Governing Council Session of a Special Character held in Nairobi in May 1982 to commemorate ten years after the Stockholm Conference. The major environmental trends of global concern identified at the UNEP meeting were interrelationships among people, resources, environment and development; rational use of natural resources, the need for an improvement in the patterns of development and life-styles in developing countries, the existence of "inner limits" as shown by the problem of the satisfaction of basic human needs for the alleviation of poverty and underdevelopment, and the problem of the ecological capabilities of the earth to sustain life through its dynamic eco-systems and to maintain the ecological balance in nature or "outer limits" for the removal of wastes, control of pollution and renewal of resources.

49. He then related the document to the Lagos Plan of Action which was regarded as an African blueprint for economic change to correct the economic ills which had made Africa's development stagnate over the past two United Nations International Development Decades. One of the priorities of the Lagos Plan of Action was the reduction of mass poverty and underdevelopment and that was embodied in the concept of meeting basic human needs to improve the productivity of the absolute poor in African society discussed in the document. He further stated that, of the other priorities emphasized in the Lagos Plan of Action, ie improvement of agricultural performance for self-sufficiency in food production, and promotion of rapid industrialization to change the patterns of production, consumption and trade in goods and services for the masses, industrialization would pose more serious environmental problems than food production. Hence the document chose to present an in-depth analysis of the environmental problems concerned with rapid industrialization so that Africa could learn from the experience of others. The two areas covered in the document - meeting basic human needs and the environmental dimensions of industrialization - cut across the nine priority areas of environmental concern identified by the African member States in the Lagos Plan of Action.

50. In dealing with the environmental dimensions of the United Nations Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA), he pointed out that studies had indicated that the African continent was endowed with a wealth of natural resources which formed the basis for industrialization. The most serious environmental concern of industrialization was the possibility of releasing large quantities of hazardous chemical wastes with an irreversible impact on the environment's capability to sustain healthy life. He then listed the main areas of industrialization in Africa today, such as textiles, food processing, chemicals, forest-based production and pulp and paper, human settlements and building construction, mineral exploitation metallurgical industries, with a detailed analysis of the iron and steel industrial processes and the engineering industries. He concluded by calling the attention of member States to studies on cost-benefit analysis of environmental control measures in industries, carried out by OECD countries. He also called their attention to the need to develop an infrastructural support machinery for environmental protection in each member State.

51. Several delegations observed that the document covered such substantive matters that, in compliance with the United Nations six-weeks rule on the matter, it should have been sent earlier to member States for study. Some delegations pointed out that positive steps had been taken in the document to identify priority areas of environmental concern to the African region for the future, which must be related to the provision of available resources for implementation. Some delegations emphasized that their countries were mainly concerned with a broad-based development strategy for the masses and the creation of public awareness for the control of deforestation, soil and water conservation, poverty and underdevelopment, as stated in the Lagos Plan of Action. Another delegation urged member States to show the political will and adopt a new strategy to overcome poverty and underdevelopment since political and economic fragmentation constituted a stranglehold on the African development strategy.

52. One representative observed that the Nairobi Declaration adopted at the Session of a Special Charter of the UNEP Governing Council had identified the interrelationships between population, resources, environment and development as the natural links between human settlements and environment. He further stressed that in declaring 1987 as the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, emphasis should be put on the provision of clean water, proper sanitation, pollution control and the eradication of poverty and environmental diseases. Several delegations pointed out that they were essential criteria for meeting basic human needs to improve the quality of life of the African people, remove environmental degradation, economic debility and mass poverty. Some delegations remarked that the twin problems of the environmental aspects of human settlements were seen in the erosive effects of human activities in agricultural production, industrialization, protection of settlements in times of war, especially nuclear war, in urbanization and population migration and in the apartheid policy imposed on the peoples of Namibia and South Africa. They also pointed out the need for technical assistance to cope with urban environmental problems such as noise and other forms of pollution, squatter and slum areas, preventive health care as well as rural settlements development and planning. One delegation emphasized that its Government had developed an environmental policy for the rational use of the country's natural resources and had created a National Centre for Pollution Control to deal with industrialization and urban waste disposal.

53. The representative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) mentioned the smooth connexion between the Stockholm Action Plan and the Lagos Plan of Action. He pointed out that further study of the perspective document was necessary especially with regard to the financial considerations for implementation, although UNEP would be interested in joint activities for developing air and water pollution control guidelines. The observer for the German Foundation for International Development stated that environmental issues would be given greater emphasis in the future programmes of her organization. The representative of the International Labour Office (ILO) emphasized its environmental programme which included training, preparation of technical documents and setting of standards in the field of occupational safety and health in the working environment. The representative of the Africa Regional Organization for Standardization (ARSO) Pointed out that his organization had already formed eight technical committees covering various sectors and that when resources allowed the next technical committee could be on environmental matters of pollution control.

Environmental education and training programme for Africa (item 9)

54. The representative of the secretariat stated that document E/ECA/ENV/4 was divided into four sections:

(a) Introduction;
(b) Joint UNEP/ECA mission report on environmental education and training;
(c) Joint AIHTTR/WHO feasibility study for a Centre for Environmental Studies and Infrastructure; and
(d) Summary and recommendations.

He pointed out that, since the historic Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, several United Nations organizations had had several activities regarding environmental education and training in the region. In conjunction with those organizations, some universities and other organizations had sponsored seminars and workshops relating to the need for an environmental education and training programme.

55. He also pointed out that, in recognition of the importance of manpower development for the management and protection of the African environment, the UNEP Governing Council had adopted several decisions on the subject, such as UNEP GC/9/20/D of 26 May 1981 and identified environmental education and training and technical assistance as a priority for development. The same UNEP decision had requested the Executive Director of UNEP to explore jointly with ECA the possibilities of establishing a regional institution for environmental education and training within the region and to seek ways and means of providing support to national institutions for environmental protection and management in Africa. The document was concerned primarily with the findings and recommendations of a joint ECA/UNEP mission in connexion with that decision, and a note from the secretariat regarding the recommendations of the WHO Consultant on the planned centre for environmental and infrastructural studies within the framework of the African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research (AIHTTR).

56. Regarding the mission report, as a whole most African countries did offer environment-related courses such as medicine, agriculture, zoology, etc., but what was lacking was an interdisciplinary approach to environmental training. Concerning national institutions for the protection and management of the environment, the mission observed that the infrastructure for environmental protection and management did exist in most African countries but the responsibilities were spread out through several governmental agencies and organizations. What was lacking at the national levels, therefore, were centralized national institutions responsible for environmental protection and management.

57. Regarding the WHO consultant report on the African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research (AIHTTR) the representative of the secretariat stated that in 1980, WHO had funded a feasibility study whose purpose was to consult with the Director General of the Institute, an ECA-sponsored institution, on the further planning of the centre for environmental studies and infrastructure. The consultant had recommended that at the initial stages of the centre, the following two broad areas should be emphasized:

(a) Environmental protection, comprising environmental engineering, water supply and waste disposal, and environmental pollution;

(b) Environmental management, comprising environmental health, environmental administration and control.

The consultant had also recommended that the following categories of personnel should be trained:

(a) Environmental health officers, at the B.Sc. level;

(b) Environmental engineers for water supply, waste disposal and pollution control, at the undergraduate (B,Sc.) and graduate levels (M.Sc.).

58. Taking into consideration the activities in environmental education and training in the African region, the representative of the secretariat recommended the establishment of a single focal point at the regional level for environmental education and training programmes. UNEP, UNESCO, ILO, WMO, WHO, AIHTTR, OAU and ECA should constitute the focal point. The secretariat endorsed the findings and recommendations of the joint WHO/AIHTTR report.

59. During the general discussion on the document, one participant observed that the terms used by the WHO consultant seemed to be unacceptable environmental terminology. Another representative pointed out that the university in his country did offer environmental education and training programmes but the document had failed to make mention of that fact. Another observed that his country had established a Ministry of Environment and Tourism which had an environmental awareness programme within its activities. Another participant stated that his country's Ministry of Housing and Environment had started the publication of monthly monographs whose objective was to inform the general public about environmental matters.

60. The ILO representative observed that the document rightly observed that ILO was involved with environmental training and education, and that it had an environmental education component within its management training programme.

61. The UNEP representative observed that the document seemed to suggest what the joint UNEP/ECA mission felt should not be done, namely the establishment of new institutions.

Follow-up action on the development of environmental protection legislation in the ECA region (item 10)

62. The representative of the secretariat presented the end-of-project report document (E/CN.14/ECU/5 which should now be numbered E/ECA/ENV/3) as a joint ECA/UNEP publication on the follow-up action for ECA Conference of Ministers resolution 412(XVI) on the development of environmental protection legislation in the African region. He called the attention of member States to the operative paragraphs of the resolution, urging them to review their environmental protection legislation in the various sectors of development identified in the document and discussed at a previous Seminar for Lawyers from 15 African member States.

63. In the general debate that followed, one delegation noted that African Governments needed to make more effort in translating regional conventions into national legislation. Another representative pointed out that his Government had adopted an Environmental Protection Bill to co-ordinate environmental activities within the country. Another stressed that the document stated that no country report had been submitted by his Government whilst it had already developed an Environmental Code and was very much interested in environmental law as a member of the working group, and in the law of the sea. One representative analysed the difficulties of setting up national environmental

legislation, reviewing existing laws or even creating new ones as called for by the resolution. He informed the meeting of the development of subregional protocols between his Government and neighbouring States on marine pollution.

64. In the area of building codes for human settlements covered in the document, several delegations stressed the need to re-examine the content and purpose of existing building codes as relics of the colonial era, which failed to serve present day needs to reduce the exhorbitant cost of acquiring decent shelter. Most of the provisions of such building codes prevented the improvement of shanties and urban slums. Delegations requested ARSO to assist member States in the improvement of their building codes through subregional or regional standardization of building materials specifications and in quality control in the export/import trade in construction materials. One delegation pointed out that his Government had developed a Forestry Code for the rational use of its forest resources.

65. The representative of ARSO pointed out that his organization was at present supported by only 21 African member States and appealed for support from other States members of OAU. Such increased support was necessary to enable ARSO to execute its programmes on food standards and assistance to member States for the establishment and strengthening of their national standards bodies. The representative of ILO pointed out the omission in the document of the environmental legislation activities of ILO in the area of safety criteria in the working environment.

Human environment work programme and medium-term plan for 1984-1989 (item 11)

66. The representative of the secretariat introduced the human environment work programme and priorities for 1982-1983 (document E/CN.14/790/Rev.1) and the environment medium-term plan for 1984-1989 (document A/37/6). He pointed out that, as indicated in document E/ECA/IGRC/HS/ENV/Inf.2, para 48(e), page 3, both documents had been discussed at the second meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole and approved at the seventh meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers, both held in Freetown, Sierra Leone, in April 1982. He stressed that the documents were presented only as information documents as the present meeting was the first intergovernmental one on environmental matters.

67. Finally, he pointed out that the ECA environment work programme for 1982-1983 comprised three parts, namely the general programme concerned with technical advisory services to member States, a task which was being shared with the UNEP Regional Office for Africa located at the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, the regional programme consisting of studies, collection and dissemination of information and organization of conferences, seminars, workshops, study tours on environmental problems such as deforestation, desertification, non-conventional energy production and use, rehabilitation of mined-out sites and marine pollution control; and the subregional programme for the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) based at Lusaka, Gisenyi, Niamey, Yaoundé and Tangiers. He also indicated that the medium-term plan for the environment had only one subprogramme, namely "Development of environmental capabilities including conservation of resources and pollution control". Those remarks were noted for discussion at the sub-committee level.

Combating desertification in Africa (item 12)

68. In introducing the subject, the representative of the secretariat pointed out that document E/ECA/CM.8/21/Rev.1 had been discussed at the eighth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers held in Tripoli in April 1982, which was adopted by resolution 446(XVII) attached as annex II to the document. He pointed out the background to the adoption of the resolution as contained in the document, and highlighted the ecological, environmental and socio-cultural causes of the desertification process, the special economic considerations for arid land development within the context of the least developed country status of the countries affected by desertification and drought, the efforts of the United Nations system and the international community in combating desertification and the need for increased technical co-operation on the problem. He called the attention of member States tothe establishment of a Regional Intergovernmental Committee to Combat Desertification in Africa, with its specific terms of reference as indicated in the resolution. He also pointed out the recommendation to the Economic and Social Council to establish a machinery similar to the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) for the Eastern and Southern African subregion. Participants took note of that information for discussion at the sub-committee level.

II. Environment sub-committee

69. Sub-committee I on environmental matters discussed agenda items 7 to 12, under the chairmanship of the first Vice-President, Mr. Gaston Félicien Olouna Mouba.

70. To open the discussions, the Chairman requested the secretariat to clarify certain points raised at the plenary session. They included:

(a) A request by the Senegalese representative for an explanation on the absence of a country report on legislative instruments in document E/ECA/ECU/5, p.92, when the country had a number of legislative texts on environmental protection;

(b) The supposed contradictions in the recommendation contained in the document on environmental education and training (E/ECA/ENV/4) and the use of environmental management in the French text;

(c) A request for an explanation as to why the Regional Seas programme was not included as one of the areas of collaboration with UNEP.

71. The explanations for the points raised above were as follows:

(a) There was no country report on Senegal as no representative from that country had attended the seminar. However, the document adequately covered all aspects of environmental legislation in Senegal from the consultant's report submitted;

(b) With regard to environmental education (document E/ECA/ENV/4), it was explained that the firm single focal point in paragraph 25 and the term single co-ordinating body in paragraph 26 referred to the same thing. Concerning environmental management, it was pointed out that the confusion might have arisen from the French text, but that the word "management" was adequate in the English text;

(c) For document E/ECA/ENV/1, it was explained that the mention of project relating to the establishment of the Environment Co-ordination Unit was warranted as it was the main UNEP-sponsored project in which the Commission was involved. The project encompassed elements of the Regional Seas programme on which ECA and UNEP collaborated. Concerning the blanket dismissal of further studies, it was explained that the statement that "further studies are often superfluous" did not mean that "further studies were not needed".

72. In the discussion that followed, it was agreed that the problem concerning contradictions in document E/ECA/ENV/4 might apply to the French text but that the word "management" in English did not present any confusion.

73. Agenda item 7 (document E/ECA/ENV/1) Participants emphasized that there was need to strengthen the manpower resources of the Environment Co-ordination Unit at ECA so as to enhance the activities that the Unit carried out so satisfactorily, despite the resource constraints. Several participants stressed that it was now time to move from studies into concrete action.

74. A question was also raised about the institutional arrangement whereby the UNEP Regional Office for Africa was located in Nairobi away from the Commission. Participants expressed the wish for a merger of the two as they felt that the Regional Office had not had the impact it should have had, particularly being located in Nairobi. There was concern that scarce resources were being dispersed. They expressed the wish that the Environment Co-ordination Unit in ECA should be strengthened, probably through bilateral support.

75. The representative of UNEP explained that the issues of the mandate of the Regional Office for Africa and that of the Environment Co-ordination Unit should not be confused, merging the two offices would be difficult and inappropriate. However the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment might want to convey to the next Governing Council meeting of UNEP, its wish that even closer working relationships should be encouraged between the Regional Office for Africa and the Environment Co-ordination Unit.

76. Participants felt that a resolution for the strengthening of the Environment Co-ordination Unit was called for. (See resolution 3 annexed to this sub-committee report).

77. Some participants brought to the attention of the secretariat the fact that the use of the word 'ecologique' did not mean 'Environment' and that they should not be used interchangeably.

78. Agenda item 8 It was agreed that:

(a) The title of the document "Environmental perspective for a regional programme for Africa up to the year 2000" was far broader than the content of the document as it did not cover all the priority areas of concern identified for the Africa region. The document gave a comprehensive analysis of meeting basic human needs and of the environmental dimensions of industrialization. The amended title agreed for the document was "Environmental perspective for a regional programme within the framework of the Industrial Development Decade for Africa";

(b) A resolution based on the recommendations in paragraphs 58 to 62 of the document should be drawn up for consideration by the sub-committee (see resolution 1(I) annexed to this report).

79. Agenda item 9 (E/ECA/ENV/4) Regarding the question of the consultant's terminology, the secretariat responded that document E/ECA/ENV/4 only quoted the consultant's mission report and it might not be proper to change the terminology of a WHO document without consultations.

80. On the question of the establishment of new institutions in Africa, the secretariat observed that the recommendations of the joint ECA/UNEP mission established pursuant to Governing Council decision 9/20 D (see paragraphs 11 and 12) did not conflict with those of the secretariat in paragraph 25 on the joint WHO/AIHTTR feasibility study. The former referred to the CIFCA type of Environmental Education and Training Centre in Madrid which was supported to a large extent by Spain. The ECA could support such an arrangement but was obliged to continue supporting AIHTTR which had been functioning for two years.

81. The explanations were accepted by participants who nevertheless noted that the questions had been raised in the plenary and should have been answered at that time.

82. A lengthy discussion ensued on the recommendation of the secretariat that a single focal point in the region should be established for environmental education and training programmes. The conclusions which emerged were that:

(a) The need existed at the regional level for a single focal point for environmental education and training programmes, and that focal point could act as a catalyst for strengthening national institutions of learning to provide environmental education and training programmes;

(b) However a single co-ordinating body with a secretariat should not be established to that purpose;

(c) Rather, the present Environmental Co-ordination Unit at ECA should be strengthened to provide the catalytic function regarding environmental education and training functions.

83. In conclusion, participants adopted resolution 3(I) attached to the report.

84. Agenda item 10: Agenda item 10 was not considered because the English version of the document had not been available for the required six weeks in advance and the French version had not been issued at all. The secretariat of ECA apologized for its failure to distribute the document in accordance with the six weeks rule in both languages.

85. Agenda item 11: The document in question was presented for information purposes only particularly the work programme since it was already being executed. On the medium term plan, participants were satisfied with the amendments made by the Committee on Programme Co-ordination (CPC). They requested further clarification on the staffing position in the Environment Co-ordination Unit at ECA for implementing the programme of work submitted. The representative of UNEP drew attention to the need to harmonize the ECA medium-term plan with the UNEP SWITEP document. The secretariat assured him that that had been done already. The meeting then took note of the documents.

86. Agenda item 12: Participants expressed satisfaction with the content of the document and particularly with the accompanying resolution 446(XVII) of the ECA Conference of Ministers in Tripoli, April 1982. The meeting took note of the document and the need for the implementation of the resolution as soon as possible.

III. Human settlements sub-committee

87. The deliberations of the sub-committee were carried out under the chairmanship of M. Babikr Ali Eltom, Mini[illegible]f Construction and Public Works, the Sudan. The rapporteur assisted by th[illegible]sentative of the secretariat serviced the sub-committee.

88. The discussions were ba[illegible] the three documents relating to human settlements presented at the plenary session. The major issues that came up during the discussions are presented below:

Human settlements financing mechanisms (in relation to the setting up of housing financing institutions (E/ECA/HUS/1)

89. Discussions on the document centred on the following issues:

(a) The reasons for the exclusion of finance administration, rural housing and indirect benefits through cost-reduction, from the subjects treated in the document;

(b) Problems related to the implementation of the idea of "housing cess" advocated in the document;

(c) Interest rates on housing loans;

(d) Other potential sources of funds for financing housing,

(e) Payment defaults relating to contractor pre-financing;

(f) Problems related to housing for refugees.

90. The representative of the secretariat explained that the reason for the present coverage was that, since housing finance was a rather complex issue with many aspects, it would be desirable to direct the attention of the Joint Committee on Human Settlements and Environment to specific items for discussions so that concrete proposals for follow-up actions could emerge.

91. While accepting the fact that the "housing cess" could generate substantial funds for housing, many delegations wondered what public opinion would be if contributors were unable to obtain houses after a period of time. After a long and lively debate on the subject, one delegation cited the example of Mexico where the rules governing the administration of the "housing cess" permitted contributors to withdraw their contributions if they had not benefited from the scheme after six years. The sub-committee agreed that that was an acceptable compromise which would allay the fears of contributors about such a scheme for generating funds for housing.

92. Some delegations mentioned that other potential sources of funds, such as government bonds, lotteries, etc. could be explored and wondered why the document had not referred to them. The representative of the secretariat explained that these could be other potential sources of funds but each of them had its own special problems in the context of national situations. It was therefore prudent to concentrate on a few sources that were likely to lead to concrete results.

93. Many participants supported the system of contractor pre-financing as a means of assisting small local contractors but pointed out the risks involved in terms of default in repayment of the loans. The representative of the secretariat reminded the meeting that all forms of financial assistance carried an element of risk. However, the administration of a pre-financing system should be operated with certain loan guarantee measures which would minimize the risks involved.

94. The prevailing high interest rates on housing loans charged in almost all countries of the region was a matter of concern to many delegations. They wondered whether it would be possible for Governments to seek a reduction in prevailing interest rates or subsidize housing loans. One delegation drew the sub-committee's attention to the fact that,within the existing monetary unions, no single country could decide to reduce interest rates unilaterally. Some other delegations were of the opinion that government subsidies were inevitable. The representative of the secretariat maintained that, if funds were raised through a special tax, for example, the "housing cess", it would be possible to advocate for very low interest rates.

95. Finally the sub-committee appealed to ECA and UNCHS (Habitat) for additional technical assistance in resolving the problem relating to the provision of housing for refugees.

96. The sub-committee made the following recommendations:

(a) The secretariat should co-ordinate with the countries through correspondence and field missions to collect more detailed information on the experience of member countries regarding the issues raised on the potential sources of finance discussed in the document as well as other sources mentioned by participants. The particular sources in question related to housing cess, pensions and other long-term savings, lotteries, government bonds, contributions from employers, etc. The secretariat should initiate the required contacts with member countries not later than two months from the end of the present meeting;

(b) ECA and UNCHS (Habitat) should, on a phased basis, encourage, promote, organize and finance missions to carry out comparative studies at the national level to enable each country to collect the data required to set up its own system of planning and financing human settlements programmes and its own system of housing;

(c) The secretariat should select one or two member countries and provide them with technical assistance to organize some of the financing mechanisms suggested in the document, not neglecting the valuable contributions made by participants as well as the additional information to be collected as stated in (a) above;

(d) Discussions indicated that rural housing financing was a major area of concern to all African countries. The secretariat was therefore called upon to initiate immediate studies into that area of financing through a method similar to that suggested in (c) above;

(e) ECA and HABITAT should, as a matter of urgency, co-ordinate their efforts and provide the necessary technical and financial support to the three programmes mentioned above;

(f) ECA and HABITAT should continue their collaboration with the Shelter-Afrique project and should offer the necessary technical support to the project at both the national and regional levels.

Spatial planning within the framework of the Monrovia strategy for the economic development of Africa

97. The sub-committee noted that the following were the issues which had emerged during the plenary discussion on the ECA document on the subject and which could form the basis for formulating recommendations:

(a) The basic approach to spatial planning and its integration in national development was sound and needed to be adopted by all countries;

(b) To do so African countries however needed technical assistance from ECA in order to strengthen and/or develop national capacities and machineries for spatial planning;

(c) Suitable training facilities and programmes and machineries should be developed leading to the gradual development of an African cadre of experts in that field, whose expertise could be rotated for the benefit of all countries;

(d) There was need for evaluating country resources and capacities for physical planning and identifying the gaps and formulating the steps to be taken.

(e) There was need for improving the co-ordination between the Ministry of Planning and the other ministries concerned with human settlements aspects. A focal machinery was required,

(f) It might be useful to undertake a pilot project for spatial planning in an African country and develop a model for consideration by other countries.

98. In the discussions, the participants made the following recommendations:

(a) Spatial planning and its effective integration in national planning required high level attention, which would also ensure inter-ministerial co-ordination. Locating the responsibility in the Office of the President or the Prime Minister was a possibility for consideration;

(b) African countries must be assisted in setting up an appropriate machinery for spatial planning. For that purpose the facilities which already existed in some African countries must be studied, expanded and utilized before new machineries are set up;

(c) The requirements of physical planning at the various levels (national, provincial and district) should be studied carefully and spelt out. They might depend upon country conditions and priorities. It would be useful for the countries to share the knowledge and experience of each other in seminars and other fora of consultations while designing their own operating instruments for planning and implementation, ECA should design and operate a pilot project whose experiences could serve as the basis for developing country models. A prior assessment of the existing resources and capacities in respect of physical planning and future needs must form part of the pilot project and the resulting model;

(d) ECA should study ways and means of expanding and utilizing the training facilities for particular purposes which existed in some countries (for example, the United Republic of Cameroon, Kenya, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania). At the same time, the higher education curricula in universities and engineering institutions should be redesigned to take care of the special areas of training needed, such as town and country planning, rural development, etc. There was also need to upgrade spatial planning posts in order to attract high calibre personnel in the profession.

A framework of strategy for the development of the construction sector in the African region

99. The sub-committee noted that the following issues which had emerged during the plenary discussion could be the basis for formulating recommendations.

(a) Since the building materials and construction industries were included in the core projects of the Industrial Development Decade for Africa, African Governments must take steps to include the sector in the national components of the Decade programme and prepare a comprehensive development plan;

(b) 'Nodal mechanisms' at the national level and 'development councils' at the subregional level should be set up in order to provide necessary focal attention and thrust to the preparation and implementation of the above plan;

(c) Local building materials production should be developed as a matter of priority on the basis of cost and quality competitiveness, locally relevant technologies, diversification and decentralization;

(d) In the context of technology development, building and building materials research facilities and programmes should be set up on a subregional basis and other forms of intra-African co-operation. Along with research, a regional information network with national and subregional linkages should also be set up;

(e) Establishment of training facilities and programmes in building materials production and construction techniques for technicians was an urgent necessity and subregional facilities must be promoted by enlarging existing facilities and by creating new ones;

(f) An indigenous cadre of competent and reliable contractors should be developed. As a first step, the existing nucleus of small unorganized contractors should be groomed into medium-scale contractors with managerial and technical expertise.

100. In the discussions, participants made the following recommendations.

(a) The above-mentioned aspects concerning the sector represented a practical framework of action by all African countries. ECA should therefore assist African Governments in formulating a detailed development programme. In particular, the more-handicapped,i.e.the land-locked and least developed countries, should receive special attention;

(b) It was necessary for African Governments to prepare a long-term plan for the development of the sector, specially in the context of the Industrial Development Decade. Each country should proceed to set up the 'nodal mechanism' if it has not already been done; also subregional 'development councils' should be formed for inter-country consultations and joint actions;

(c) The local building materials industry tended to suffer from discrimination in favour of imported materials and ostracism owing to lack of political back up for their production and utilization. That situation should be remedied. At the same time, it was necessary for the local industry to improve its image in respect of cost and quality competitiveness;

(d) The promotion of local materials depended critically upon changes in attitudes. Besides bulk-users, like the Government, architects and contractors should encourage the utilization of local materials. Governmental action was also necessary in terms of the reformulation of building codes and regulations, standardization and dissemination of information. Establishment of pilot-cum-demonstration projects should also be considered.

(e) Science and technology had a universal application and should not be considered in a narrow context of national needs. Building and building materials research facilities should be set up on the basis of inter-country co operation as a priority and the experience of ECA and UNCHS in that field should be used through technical assistance which those organizations give to the countries. Wherever possible, existing research facilities should be expanded. Those actions should be fortified with a strong regional information network with appropriate national and subregional linkages.

(f) Countries should also organize a sound statistical base and work out a long range projection of construction demand and its subelements to enable the building materials industries and the construction services to plan their future actions on that basis.

(g) Training of technicians should be given high priority. There should be a special effort to assist small contractors with managerial and technical expertise and promote their capacity to undertake more and more complex contracts. There was also need for revising and simplifying existing contractual terms and procedures to enable local entrepreneurs to understand them better. Education curricula should also be improved to include required subjects for higher-level personnel. UNESCO assistance in regard to an educational base for training would be very helpful.

(h) The ILO guidelines on the construction sector were valuable. Operational collaboration among ECA, UNCHS and ILO was strongly recommended.

Any other business (item 13)

(a) Industrial Development Decade for Africa

101. A representative of the ECA secretariat explained the historical background of, and the preparatory activities being undertaken for, the Industrial Development Decade for Africa. The proposals for the Industrial Development Decade were based on the concepts, objectives, priorities and strategies of the industry section of the Lagos Plan of Action. The decision to proclaim the 1980s as the Industrial Development Decade for Africa had been endorsed by the Heads of State and Government of OAU and reaffirmed by the thirty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly in December 1980. The proposals were being circulated to African countries in four volumes, to be followed by the submission of a project document to UNDP for funding and the preparation of guidelines for initiating priority action at the national and subregional levels. He informed the meeting that "Building materials and construction" was included in the list of priority subsectors of the Decade proposals. Each country was expected to assess the implications in terms of manpower, investment and institutional requirements for implementation.

(b) Draft resolution on increasing international support for the victims of apartheid

102. Introducing the draft resolution, the Ethiopian representative requested member States to recall the first principle of the Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment that "man had the fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permitted a life of dignity and well-being, and he bore a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations. In this respect, policies promoting or perpetuating apartheid, racial segregation, discrimination, colonial and other forms of oppression and foreign domination stood condemned and must be eliminated". He also recalled a decision of the ninth session of the Governing Council of UNEP which requested the Executive Director to carry out a study of the impact of apartheid and how it damaged the environment.

103. After amendment the resolution was unanimously adopted. One delegation in particular requested the meeting to note the deliberate efforts of the Pretoria Regime to destabilize neighbouring front-line States. He urged participants to give more than more support to the victims of apartheid. He noted that there had been much rhetroric on the matter. What was needed was positive support to speed up the liberation of the people of South Africa and Namibia.

Adoption of the report (item 14)

104. The Chairmen of the environment and the human settlemements sub-committees presented the reports on the work of their respective sub-committees and highlighted the main conclusions and recommendations. The Joint committee, after comments and amendments, approved the above reports for inclusion as part of the report of the first meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment. The draft resolutions submitted by the sub-committees were also adopted with some amendments.

105. The report covering the deliberations at Plenary of the joint committee on human settlements and environment at its first session, was presented by the rapporteur. The report was adopted after comments and amendments.

106. On behalf of all delegations, Mr. E. A. Marshall, head of the Ghanaian delegation, submitted a vote of thanks to all who had contributed in diverse ways to make the first meeting of the Joint Committee on Human Settlements and Environment a real success.

Closing session

107. The meeting was closed by the Chairman, who thanked the three vice-chairmen, the rapporteur and all participants and observers for the co-operation, understanding and guidance given to him during the entire meeting. He then paid tribute to the Economic Commission for Africa for the facilities and services provided to ensure the success of the meeting. On behalf of all participants, he expressed warmest appreciation to the Government and people of Ethiopia for the warm hospitality extended to participants during their stay in Addis Ababa. In conclusion he expressed the hope that participants would be able to report on real and tangible progress in all fields of human settlements and environment in the African region at the next session of the committee in January 1984.

Resolution 1 (I)

Strengthening of environment co-ordination capabilities at the Economic Commission for Africa

The Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment,

Taking note of the growing magnitude of environmental problems in the region and the need for their immediate redress through regional co-ordination,

Aware of the urgency of the need to co-ordinate the environmental matters at the regional level to carry out inter-agency and intergovernmental activities that are within the mandate of the Commission as spelt out in terms of reference for the Environment Co-ordination Units,

Aware also of the decision adopted by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its tenth session which inter alia, called upon the Executive Director of that Programme to provide institutional support to regional co-ordinating units,

1. Requests the Executive Secretary to strengthen the Environment Co-ordination Unit of the Commission;

2. Further requeststhe Executive Secretary of the Commission to consult with the Executive Director of the Environment Programme on ways and means of further enhancing the environmental activities of the Commission in the African region.

Resolution 2 (I)

Strengthening environmental capabilities in the African region

The Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment

Recalling the Lagos Plan of Action[1/] for the implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa which pointed out inter alia that developing countries should also improve their capacity to explore and develop their natural resources and to ensure closer integration of the sector in the over-all development of their economies;

Considering the environmental pollution that may occur during and after the Industrial Development Decade for Africa;

1/ A/S - 11/14, annex I.

1. Calls upon Governments to:

(a) Strengthen their national environmental machineries to cope with the assessment of natural resources exploitation and pollution control involved in rapid industrialization;

(b) Set up national standards boards to review the industrial code and regulations for adequate environmental protection measures and to establish health criteria for workers and the industrial working environment;

(c) Establish adequate analytical laboratory facilities to monitor industrial pollutants in the air, water, soils and coastal seas for the protection of life in those habitats and to warn against contaminants in the food chains;

(d) Organize a massive human resources development programme to train the scientists, technicians, industrialists, planners and policy-makers in environmental assessment and management, needed for the Industrial Decade;

(e) Incorporate environmental considerations into national development plans for the Industrial Decade and to strengthen the legal and legislative framework for implementing policies into environmental laws and regulations with the infrastructural support for effective law enforcement;

(f) Endeavour to plough back the profits of economic growth to provide the services for making basic human needs, especially through mass education, primary health and nutrition programmes, in order to provide the work force necessary for rapid industrialization to improve the quality of life of the mass of the population;

(g) Review the terms of reference of various licensing boards and corporations responsible for the exploitation of the natural resources base for export in order to re-orient their production and management policy towards self-sustenance for the Industrial Development Decade;

2. Urges the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to establish priorities for manpower development and other environmental capabilities for the member States to implement the Industrial Development Decade for Africa;

3. Calls upon the international community and financial institutions within and outside the United Nations system to respond positively to this initiative by providing funds, trained manpower and expertise;

4. Requests the Executive Secretary to report to the Second meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on the efforts made by the Commission in the training of environmental specialists.

Resolution 3 (I)

Environmental education and training in Africa

The Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment

Recognizing the need for environmental training and education in Africa,

Noting the report[2/] of 10 June 1992 on environmental education and training in Africa and the strengthening of national institutions,

Taking into account the United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council decision 10/25 (A) and the existence of the African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research,

Further taking note of the activities of the International Labour Organization and other United Nations organizations on environmental education and training,

1. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to examine the modalities and the financial implications of creating a new environmental training institution taking into account the existing national institutions in the region and the necessity of strengthening them where appropriate;

2. Further requests the Executive Secretary to take into account the findings of the meeting of government experts and the scientific community in Africa, to be organized pursuant to decision GC.10/25 A;

3. Request the Executive Secretary to report to the second meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment on the matter.

2/ E/ECA/ENV/4.

Resolution 4 (I)

Spatial Planning within the framework of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa

The Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment,

Recalling the objectives and strategies set out in the Monrovia Declaration and the Lagos Plan of Action; 3/

Recognizing the vital role which physical planning can play in the implementation of the objectives and strategies of the Monrovia Declaration and the Lagos Plan of Action;

Recognizing further the absolute need to integrate physical planning effectively with socio-economic planning within an organizational and structural framework;

1. Calls upon African Governments to accord high-level attention and organize the means and procedures for facilitating physical planning in their countries and within their transnational homogeneous subregions as the framework of their economic planning, and resources potential and capacities evaluation;

2. Requests Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to:

(a) Assist member States in above task by undertaking a pilot project and elaborating the results in a model for the consideration of the member States;

(b) Convene in 1983 a meeting of an ad hoc group of experts in physical planning and socio-economic planning to identify and recommend appropriate methodologies and institutional arrangements at the national level, for integrating physical planning with socio-economic planning;

(c) Report, in detail, the findings and recommendations of the meeting of the ad hoc group of experts to the next meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment.

3. Urges Governments and the Economic Commission for Africa to give priority to the training of all categories and cadres of manpower in the fields of human settlements and the environment and ensure optimum utilization of existing facilities in this regard and organize required operational co-operation with other United Nations agencies and intergovernmental and international organizations.

3/ AS-11/14, Annex I.

Resolution 5 (I)

Building Materials and Construction Industries Development

The Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment,

Recalling resolution 2(II) of the Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements,

Taking note of the situation and needs in the field of building materials and construction industries brought out in the document entitled "A framework of strategy for the development of the construction sector in the African region", 4/

Commending the secretariat of the Commission on the success of the development programme so far undertaken and on the launching of its second phase (1982-1983) with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme with new dimensions of activities vital for African countries,

Expressing satisfaction with the inclusion of building materials and construction industries in the list of core industries identified by the Commission, the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization for the Industrial Development Decade for Africa thereby according due recognition to the crucial importance of these industries,

Welcoming the statement of the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) regarding his organization's interest and co-operation in specific activities of the Commission's development programme for building materials and construction industries

Welcoming also the statements made by the representatives of the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the African Development Bank and the African Regional Organization for Standardization similarly offering co-operation,

1. Calls upon the African Governments to:

(a) Accelerate the development of a strong and self-reliant indigenous construction sector through long-range planning of construction demand, special policies, institutional services, financing and skills training facilities;

(b) Take steps, singly or collectively, to achieve increased production of all possible types of building materials with due regard to the possibilities of diversification and decentralization and in particular to cost and quality competitiveness;

(c) Promote joint facilities and programmes for research, information and manpower training on the basis of intra-African co-operation and technical co-operation among developing countries;

(d) Make optimum use of the technical and field services of the Commission, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and the International Labour Organization in the achievement of the above tasks.

2. Specially requests African Governments in the context of the programme for the Industrial Development Decade for Africa to:

(a) Ensure that a well articulated development programme for building materials and construction industries properly oriented to local needs and priorities is specifically incorporated in the national component of the programme for Industrial Development Decade for Africa;

(b) Set up a 'nodal mechanism' at the national level and a 'development council' at the subregional level as recommended in the aforementioned document in order to provide the required focal attention and thrust to the integrated development of the building materials and construction industries;

(c) Submit a report on actions taken on the above to the next meeting of the Joint Intergovernmental Committee on Human Settlements and Environment;

3. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission and the Executive Directors of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Labour Organization, the African Development Bank and the African Regional Organization for Standardization to draw up, in consultation, a plan of action and the modalities of agency co-operation for specific project activities envisaged in the building materials and construction industries development programme and specially, the following:

(a) Pilot plants/demonstration projects for promoting low-cost building materials production of good quality based on local resources;

(b) Training of skilled and semi-skilled labour in building materials production and construction practices;

(c) Development of the existing nucleus of small contractors into an organized cadre of medium-scale contractors by providing them with necessary managerial and technical expertise and training opportunities;

(d) Reformulation of building codes and regulations oriented to the actual needs of African countries;

(e) Building and building materials research facilities;

(f) Development of a regional network of information services on building materials and construction industries with national and subregional linkages;

(g) Formulation of unified standards for building materials and construction practices so as to achieve quality and cost-reduction in construction;

(h) Preparation of manuals/booklets/audio-visual aids on building materials and building techniques;

(i) Regional workshops, seminars of experts and product/technology exhibitions.

4. Further requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to take all possible steps to ensure that the building materials and construction industries development programme is continued beyond its present completion date of December 1983, since African countries consider it as an essential service for the effective development of the national components of the programme;

5. Requests the United Nations Development Programme and other concerned United Nations agencies, African Governments, and donor organizations to provide the Commission with required financial and technical assistance for the continuation of the activities in this field beyond December 1983.

Resolution 6 (I)

Human settlements financing mechanisms (in relation with the setting up of housing finance institutions)

The Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment,

Taking note of the document on human settlements financing mechanisms (in relation with the setting up of housing finance institutions),

Recognizing the vital role of financing mechanisms in human settlements development, the present inadequacies and the possibilities of augmenting the availability of finance through other innovative approaches,

Expressing satisfaction over the efforts being taken by the African countries themselves and by the African Development Bank;

Further expressing satisfaction over the initiative and efforts being taken by UNCHS and the possibilities of closer co-operation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and the Commission in this field and in particular to the promotion of improved rural housing facilities;

1. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to:

(a) Organize quickly the compilation of the necessary data on the experiences of member States regarding the various potential sources of finance such as housing cess, pensions, other long-term savings, lotteries, government bonds, employers' contribution etc., for evaluation;

(b) Select one or two member States and provide the required technical assistance in organizing financing schemes based on some of the above mentioned possibilities;

(c) Consult the Executive Director of the Centre for Human Settlements and seek co-operation arrangements and technical and financial support;

(d) Arrange similarly co-operation and support with the Shelter Afrique project.

2. Calls upon African Governments to:

(a) Undertake an assessment of the possibilities for mobilizing finance through the other sources illustrated above and keep the Economic Commission for Africa informed;

(b) Provide necessary co-operation and assistance to the Economic Commission for undertaking the suggested studies.

Resolution 7 (I)

Increasing international support for the victims of apartheid

The Joint Intergovernmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment,

Recalling the first principle of the Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment;

Further recalling the subsequent actions taken by the United Nations system to fight apartheid, racial segregation and all forms of discrimination, oppression and aggression;

Also recalling the decision of the ninth Session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme which requested the Executive Director to carry out a study on the impact of apartheid and how it damaged the environment and submit it at the tenth Session of the Governing Council in May 1982;

Also recalling resolution 5/19 on assistance to victims of apartheid adopted by the Commission on Human Settlements at its fifth session;

Commending the work of the Environment Programme in conducting and submitting a report 5/ to the tenth Session of the Governing Council;

Further commending the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the direct assistance in the field of human settlements which it is giving to the victims of apartheid from South Africa;

Aware of the continuing intransigence of the racist and terrorist regime of South Africa to abide by the resolutions of the United Nations pertaining to apartheid and all forms of discrimination;

Recognizing that apartheid, racial segregation and all forms of discrimination and colonial and other forms of oppression and domination are detrimental to the socio-political and economic development of the African people and a threat to global peace and security;

5/ UNEP/GC. 10/2/Add. 2

Convinced of the need to broaden and intensify all forms of support to all forces fighting apartheid;

Bearing in mind the deep and adverse effects of apartheid on the environment such as land, natural resources, human settlements and habitats, human health, education and welfare;

1. Calls on all Governments to implement all United Nations resolutions pertaining to apartheid and all forms of discrimination and broaden their moral and material assistance to all victims of apartheidand forces fighting it;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to use his good offices to sensitize the world community about the adverse environmental impacts of apartheid and urge all Governments to increase their support to the force fighting against apartheid;

3. Recommends that the Executive Sectetary of the Economic Commission for Africa bring the present appeal to the thirty seventh Session of the General Assembly;

4. Invites the representatives of member States to bring to the attention of their Governments the present appeal on increasing the scope and content of support to the victims of apartheid.